

REMARKS

In the November 21, 2007 Office action, claims 44-57 were pending. Claims 44-57 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,864,827 (“Wilson”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,039,245 (“Symonds”).

Claims 44-46, 49, 51-53, 55 and 57 have been amended. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration in light of the amended claims and the remarks herein.

Telephonic Interview and Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Applicants appreciate Examiner Nguyen agreeing to conduct a telephonic interview on March 13, 2008 to discuss the November 21, 2007 Final Office action and the cited references. During the interview, Applicants discussed pending independent claims 44 and 52 and the differences between claims 44 and 52 and Wilson and Symonds alone and in combination. Applicants pointed out how Applicants’ claim 44 recites a plurality of gateways linking a plurality of electronic portals through a central transit point to the application program interface and internal systems of a plurality of price providers and how the gateways translate portal-specific data formats into a normalized data format for communication with the plurality of price providers. Applicants similarly pointed out how Applicant’s claim 52 recites a plurality of gateways each of which is located at a price provider for communicating with an application program interface of the price provider and for translating portal-specific data formats into the normalized data format of the particular price provider at which the gateway is located.

At the conclusion of the interview, Applicants agreed to amend the claims in light of the discussed differences, and Examiner Nguyen agreed to consider a proposed amendment to independent claims 44 and 52, in light of the comments made during the telephonic interview. On March 17, 2008, Applicants submitted by e-mail alternative proposals to amend claims 44

and 52. On March 18, 2008, Examiner Nguyen contacted Applicants by email to suggest additional clarifying language to claims 44 and 52. On March 18, 2008, Applicants provided a second draft of amendments to claims 44 and 52 in light of Examiner Nguyen's suggestion. On March 24, 2008, Examiner Nguyen suggested a further clarifying amendment, which is embodied in the amended claims presented herein. Applicants appreciate Examiner Nguyen's consideration of the proposed amendments.

Applicants submit herewith a set of amended claims directed to the proposed claims submitted on March 18, 2008 as clarified per Examiner's Nguyen's suggestion. Claims 44-46, 49, 51-53, 55 and 57 are currently amended. Applicants respectfully submit that the prior art of record does not recite at least the following limitations from Applicants' claim 44 as amended:

“a plurality of electronic portals, at least of said plurality of electronic portals being adapted to use one of multiple different portal-specific data formats”;

“a plurality of gateways, each gateway being linked to a corresponding one of said plurality of electronic portals, wherein said plurality of gateways translate data received from any of said plurality of electronic portals from a respective first portal-specific data format to a second normalized format, and for translating data received in the second normalized format from said price provider to the respective first portal-specific format” or

“a central transit point that links said plurality of gateways to ... internal computer systems of each of said plurality of price providers and through which the normalized data is transmitted to said plurality of price providers.”

Applicants respectfully submit that the cited references, alone or in combination, fail to teach at least the following limitations of claim 52 as amended:

“a plurality of electronic portals, at least two of said plurality of electronic portals being adapted to use multiple different portal-specific data formats”;

“a first gateway located at said first price provider, the first gateway adapted to communicate with each of said plurality of electronic portals using the respective portal-specific format of each respective electronic portal of said plurality of electronic portals and with said first internal computer system of said first price provider using data in a normalized format of said first price provider”; and

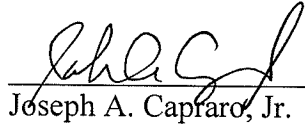
“a second gateway located at said second price provider, the second gateway adapted to communicate with each of said plurality of electronic portals using the respective portal-specific format of each respective electronic portal of said plurality of electronic portals and with said second internal computer system of said second price provider using data in a normalized format of said second price provider.”

Because the cited references, either alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest the above limitations Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection set forth in the November 21, 2007 Office Action over the combination of Wilson and Symonds. Applicants also respectfully submit that the independent claims, as amended, are in condition for allowance. Applicants submit that pending claims 45-51 and 53-57, which depend directly or indirectly from independent claims 44 and 52 also recite patentable subject matter.

CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully submit that these remarks accurately reflect the content of the telephonic interview and follow-up correspondence between Applicants and Examiner Nguyen. Applicants respectfully request entry of this paper in the record as well as reconsideration, withdrawal of the pending rejections, and allowance of the pending claims. Applicants cordially invite Examiner Nguyen to contact the undersigned attorney to expedite prosecution and put the claims in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



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